

Southeast Florida

# John D. MacArthur Beach State Park

*A beautiful beach ... and much more*

## Real Fun in the Real Florida

John D. MacArthur Beach, the only state park in Palm Beach County, is an “island in time,” preserving the lush and diverse subtropical coastal habitats that once covered southeast Florida.

Exploring nearly two miles of beach and **swimming** in the clear blue waters of the Atlantic is only the beginning of the fun visitors can have at John D. MacArthur Beach State Park. Strolling shaded **nature trails**, joining a **bird walk** and touring the estuary and Munyon Island by **kayak** affords visitors a true understanding of natural Florida. You might happen onto one of the many special events offered in the park: **children’s programs**, **guided snorkeling** adventures, recreational skills lessons, MacArthur Under Moonlight concerts, **summer day camps**, and special holiday celebrations, to name just a few.

Open daily, the **Nature Center** offers displays and live animal exhibits to enhance your knowledge of the park along with a video and friendly park staff to answer questions. Don't forget to shop in the Nature Center for just the right souvenir, or sunscreen and a beach towel, before you ride the tram back across the estuary to the beach.

Visit [MacArthurBeach.org](http://MacArthurBeach.org) or call (561) 624-6952 for more information.

## **History & Nature**

The 325-acre park is named after the previous owner, John D. MacArthur, who wished to preserve it for future generations to enjoy. In the 1970s, after a university study revealed that the property was a biological treasure, he donated a section for use as a public park. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation contributed additional funds to develop the park and Nature Center.

A 1,600-foot boardwalk spans the most productive estuarine system in all of Lake Worth. At low tide, roseate spoonbills, white ibis, herons and egrets browse for prey. Brown pelicans, ospreys, belted

kingfishers and terns display their hunting techniques with spectacular aerial acrobatics. Fiddler crabs, signaling to their mates with oversized claws, and many species of marine snails move among the red and black mangrove roots and underwater meadows of seagrass and algae. Snook, mullet, snapper, grunts, needlefish, and the occasional spotted eagle ray and manatee cruise the deeper waters.

At the foot of the boardwalk, a trail winds through a forest of gumbo limbo, mastic, cabbage palm, strangler fig and other tropical and subtropical trees before opening onto a wide beach. The beach has a backdrop of salt-sculpted sea grape trees and sea oats, colorfully punctuated by yellow dune sunflowers, pink beach morning glory, and the tiny purple beach peanut.

MacArthur Beach is a prime nesting site for sea turtles. Large numbers of loggerhead, green and leatherback turtles nest from early May through late August.

Marine life is abundant on the reef and rock outcroppings that lie in shallow water near the beach. Reef squid, colorful tropical fish and schools

of tarpon and snook are a source of delight for snorkelers.

## **Directions**

Located in northern Palm Beach County, 2.8 miles south of the intersection of U.S. 1 and PGA Boulevard on A1A.

## **Park Guidelines**

- Hours of operation are 8 a.m. until sunset, 365 days a year. The Nature Center is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., daily.
- An entrance fee is required. Additional user fees may apply.
- The collection, destruction or disturbance of plants, animals or park property is prohibited.
- Pets are permitted in designated areas only. Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet and well behaved at all times.

- Fishing is allowed in designated areas only. A Florida fishing license may be required. Pavilions are available for groups.
- Fireworks and hunting are prohibited.
- Become a volunteer. Inquire at the ranger station.
- For information about joining Friends of MacArthur Beach State Park, call (561) 624-6950.
- Florida's state parks are committed to providing equal access to all facilities and programs. Should you need assistance to enable your participation, please contact the ranger station.

## Contact Information

Florida State Parks  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Division of Recreation and Parks  
**John D. MacArthur Beach State Park**  
10900 State Road 703 (A1A)  
North Palm Beach, FL 33408

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Office: (561) 624-6950  
[FloridaStateParks.org](http://FloridaStateParks.org)